

FRIDAY

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AHATA is aware that the tourism sector must be managed

**But not at the cost of the model that  
has made our tourist industry so  
successful**





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## **But not at the cost of the model that has made our tourist industry so successful**

OUR tourist industry is vital for the continues success of Aruba. In 2014, 88% of the Gross Domestic Product of Aruba and 91% of total employment was dependant on this tourist industry. These numbers were produced by the honorable World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) that also produce similar information for 184 other countries.

The WTTC calculated that in 2014 no other country in the world was more dependent on tourism then Aruba.

Simply said, Aruba's way of living depends on a successful tourism industry. Despite the best efforts of the

Government to diversify the economy, it is not likely that this will change in a near future.

This means that if Aruba continues to grow, the tourist sector must be more competitive possible and financially more durable possible. The sector must be well managed according to the AHATA.

Because of the system that we have now, the tourism sector of Aruba is very successful. During the last 5 years, the amount of visitors in Aruba increased with 30%, while during this same period, the international visitors of the world grew with 20%, and the visitors

for the Caribbean Region grew with only 15%.

Our hotels continue with an average occupancy of below 80% during the year compared with the average in the Caribbean of 68%. Our available rooms have shown a good growth in the past and are showing great increase.

AHATA is conscious and compromised with the management of Aruba's tourist sector to improve the RevPar (total available rooms) and attract richer clients.

Aruba has a commercial model for the tourism sector that functions well. And one of the reasons why it functions is

that our industry is very receptive to conditions of the market that change constantly and changes in demands of our clients.

As for last June 2015, Aruba has a little more than 9100 rooms with available license as touristic accommodation. From which 5330 are in temporary hotel, over 3430 are in time-share resort and 400 are offered in the condominiums which are offered when the owners of the condominiums are not using them. And there are also many other rooms that are being available more and more in private homes. But that is another topic.



Michelle Hooiboer Winklaar

## First College Exchange between Canada, Holland and Aruba

The first College Exchange between Canada, Holland and Aruba took place in Canada last week. About 30 Dutch Universities and Colleges and our two local institutions, the University of Aruba and IPA, were in Toronto, Canada to explore collaboration and learn the 'best practices' of the Canadian Universities. Superior curriculums in Canada are renowned for their high standards in quality. A big difference is the cost of study compared to many schools in the USA, where it is more economical, however maintaining a solid reputation around the world.

The Universities exchange on topics like Research, Exchange and University Incubators'. The main theme was 'How can Universities stimulate Entrepreneurship in superior curriculum and develop innovation'.

The University of Aruba was represented by the new President Curator and Carol Forde, who is working to the internationalizing of the University of Aruba. IPA was represented by the General Director, drs. Ava Thode. Many opportunities were created for the students of the University of Aruba and for IPA so they can participate in future Exchange Programs with the Canadian Universities.



First General Ex-Surgeon of Afro-American origin of the United States

# Joycelyn Elders

## "Aruba is better off than The USA in the care of its citizens"

JOYCELYN Elders, General Ex-Surgeon of the USA serving during the period of Clinton was a very interesting speaker during the Health Care Conference Aruba (HCCA). She elaborated on "System Care in Small Caribbean Communities". She praised Aruba for the manner on which Aruba developed in Health Care. While Aruba offers a general medical insurance for the habitants, the USA has no general medical insurance for the 300 million habitants.

Elders of 81 years old, was the first Afro American woman to occupy the position of General Surgeon, a top position, something at the level of Health Ministry. "My task was to provide everyone in the country with the best health system possible". Elders always promoted good practices of everyone in the health sector for the welfare of the citizens in the country. Other than that she also did and is doing different tasks on health issues. "I am a health activist and now I am working harder than when I was employed", she said with a big smile on her face.

More than 250 professionals of different parts of the Kingdom and other countries of the Caribbean participated actively in the first Health Care Conference Aruba organized by the Minister of Health of Aruba, which was a suggestion of the Inter-parliament meetings of the Dutch Kingdom, IPKO.

"I am very impressed. Impressed with the conference but also impressed with the Health Care that Aruba has and the general medical insurance that Aruba offers to all the citizens. You may not have everything, but you do not need everything either. You have access to all what you have and this is the most important thing," Mrs. Elders explains. She added that the people must be happy that they have access to medical care.

After hearing all the information of Aruba on the health field, she could not conclude other than to say that the level of public health in Aruba is very good. In comparison to her country she said that "Aruba is doing

a better job as far the health care is concern, based on the system that we use to measure health. Maybe you do not have a high level of possibilities of investigation that we have, maybe you do not have recourses for high technology as we have, but when it comes to the health aspect in general I do believe that you are better."

In the USA only people who have money can have access to medical care. But maybe about 40% of the population does not have access to medical care, at least not a good quality of medical care and that is a problem. All this, I believe has to do with the financing of care and the citizens. During the time Clinton was President the amount of the uninsured people was dropped from 60 million to 30 million. He did admit that 30 million still represent a large group of uninsured people.

Even though that Aruba is a small Island, she learned a lot in the small amount of time that she spent here. "I have learned that we have to do the things we are good in and continue to involve the community in the decision making."





*"I am proud with the success of the conference and the expertise that Aruba has shown"*



THE First Health Care Conference Aruba, was realized based on the petition of the Inter-Parliament Meetings of the Kingdom, IPKO. Dr. Schwengle, Minister of Health, was the organizer behind this event. President of the Health Commission of the Parliament, Mervin Wyatt Ras, was present at the conference and was very satisfied with the content of it.

"I feel very proud of our professionals who are making great efforts to unite different Governments and I am also

very proud of Minister Alex Schwengle, who took the challenge that organize this event which was a proposal of the IPKO, which was to reach a concrete cooperation in the Kingdom on Health Care. This is a historical moment that brought the countries together to cooperate with each other."

It is very important for countries to come together and cooperate with each other and arrange a better health care for everyone, based on a higher quality which is the aim of Aruba. She mentioned also he aspect that ex

General Surgeon of the USA, Joycelyne Elders brought forth by saying that the people of Aruba seems happy and that happiness is important for one the feel healthy also.

The Health Care Conference Aruba had a participation of over 250 professionals on health care coming from the Dutch Kingdom and other countries in the Region. The theme was Public Health and how this must be managed which is something that has been discussed for some years now in Aruba. It is very

important that the whole population to have access to medical care but to have a quality one, payable and durable.

The member of the Parliament of Aruba, felt very proud when she heard all the praises about the general medical insurance (AZV) which the citizens of Aruba are enjoying. Mr. Elders explained that the USA which is a big country does not have such a general medical insurance like Aruba has. In the USA those with money can have a good medical care.

# Memorandum of Understanding **SIGNED** with World Bank

*"We agreed on essential topics for our country"*

**EARLIER** this week has the Prime Minister, Mike Eman signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the VP for the Caribbean and Latin America for the World Bank, Jorge Familiar,

Without any doubt, this agreement is very important and essential for our country. The vision of the Prime Minister and the management of the Government of Aruba is having a great impact everywhere. A small island with big plans and innovation. The management on sustainability and durability has placed this small island Aruba on the world map. This is the highlight of the vision of Mike Eman. This is an important agreement if we keep in mind that during the last years, the Government Aruba has been intensifying the ties with the World Bank.

"Upon our invitation, they came to Aruba and we showed them how Aruba has set the development of sustainability as a main goal for the next step of progress. We are focusing widely for the economical growth to be translated in a better quality of life for Aruba. There are many countries that have impressive economical growth figures as Aruba has known when tourism expanded hugely and now that we inverted to recover economically. It is essential for us to create economical models to diversify the economy, create a bigger social mobility for those who enter the labour market to continue to grow and find good jobs with a good salary. Also with a fair opportunity of progress and position and grow".

Furthermore has Mr. Eman focused on the 'learning society' which is a community where the people can not only get a diploma and finish their formation, but this formation to be continues.

The World Bank can play an important role here. A revision of the government apparatus is also being done on how to allocate personal costs, services and products, on interest and what the necessities that a modern country has to maintain the productivity, efficiency and impulse. We are searching for a new economical model.

"All these are sophisticated topics that take Aruba in another stage o development that is important for the management of durable sustainability. We can always appeal on countries like France, Germany, England, countries in South America and the USA that has seen growth in economy and has good knowledge on different economical models and what the challenges are."

Eman said that the MoU signed with the World Bank is an agreement on sustainability, economical development, energy, management of our sea, how to take care and protect our natural recourses more efficiently and how to manage Government expenditures in an innovative way with a positive impact on our economy.

"We are happy that we reached this agreement with the World Bank. Now we have to work on the four topics that World Bank wants Aruba to have for the diversification, consolidation and sustainable development of our country.





Member of Parliament of Curacao

# Hensley Koeiman Very Impressed with the Toastmasters in Aruba

RECENTLY took place a meeting of the Arikok Toastmaster Club at Dakota. This is one of the younger clubs of Aruba. Member of the Parliament from Curacao, Hensley Koeiman, accepted the invitation of Toastmaster Mireille Sint Jago at the Monumenten Fonds at Dakota.

There are 3 Toastmasters Clubs (TM) in Aruba. Each one meets twice a month. The members are people who want to develop their Leadership and Communication abilities. Based on projects in two manuals, a member will learn the 'secrets' of giving a speech. During the months of July and August, the guide that the Toastmaster mentors give to the members is more intensive. You can come as a visitor. And after you can decide to register and become a member.

Hensley Koeiman, who was an ex Toastmaster in Curacao, was very impressed with the level and quality of speeches that were given by Stephanie C. Croes and Yahaira Quandus Pourier. Koeiman also participated actively on the Table Topics Segment and he was very entertaining.

You can visit their facebook page for more information on the Toastmaster Clubs. Toastmasters, we bring out the master in you.



Evelyn Wever-Croes to Desiree Croes

# STOP the childish behavior

Aruba has bigger challenges in front of us. Let us deal with these!

DURING a press conference of the MEP party last Wednesday, the press asked the leader of MEP for her opinion about the constant attacks of Desiree Croes against her. The member of the Parliament for the Fraccion AVP, Desiree Croes has called Mrs. Evelyn Wever Croes, member of the Parliament for the Fraccion MEP, a traitor due to some pictures that Mrs. Evelyn took next to Andre Bosman from Holland.

This is the reaction of Mrs. Wever toward the attacks of Mrs. Desiree. 'I believe that Desiree Croes should grow up and stop with this childish behavior. I can go in history to remind that the only

betrayal of this country is her own political party AVP. However I will not do that because I am sure that she knows the history of her own political party better than I do. As other leaders of this country do, I too have to deal and dialogue with the politicians of Holland to accomplish a better well being for our country. Betico Croes (rip) was a pioneer in this, he dialogued with friends and enemies, and Mike Eman followed his example. I do not agree with all the ideas of Andre Bosman, but that does not mean that I can't dialogue with him.'

Bosman is the spokesperson for the Government for the Kingdom affairs. He is the one who is putting pressure on the Dutch Government to impose measurements in Aruba.

'I explained to him that he can't put this much pressure because it is not fair to the people. I explained to him that our people can not withstand this situation. I agree that something has to be done but the list of the 24 measurements that the Prime Minister Mike Eman prepared will have a negative effect on our community, while there are other alternatives. I explained to him that there are alternatives, like instead of raising the health tax with 1%, he can just get rid of the two extra Ministers he added to his cabinet. That would cause less pain to the people of Aruba. Another alternative is to put more efforts on the re-opening of the refinery.'

Mrs. Wever explains that her aim is to convince the politicians like Andre Bosman that Aruba is now aware of the bad financial management, but it is not fair for the people to pay for the bad overspending of the money that Mr. Mike Eman and his Ministers have been doing. She says further that

something needs to be done, but the priority of this should be to help the more vulnerable ones in our community.

'My aim is to convince all politicians that want to put too much pressure for the Government to implement measurements that they should first think about the alternatives. I also talked to Mr. Samson of the PvdA, Mr. Van Zwol and Minister Plasterk about this issue. And

if Desiree Croes is so anxious and the only thing that she can do is to whine on a picture, I leave that for her conscience. I have better things to do than to lose my time on the childish attitude of Desiree Croes.

Aruba has bigger challenges in front of us, our country is going through difficult times. Let us attend these problems and stop whining about childish things', concluded Mrs. Evelyn Wever Croes.





## Philippine Independence Day

Friday July 12, 2015

117 years of Independence of the Philippines  
Every year, the Philippines on the Island celebrate their Independence day in a very unique way. Friday 12 of June, 2015, they will celebrate again in big. This will be the 13th year that they raise their flag on the island of Aruba.  
"We are very happy and proud and very thankful to the Government and all other authorities on Aruba that join us every year in our celebration."

The theme of the celebration this year is 'Integration'. We have a very extensive program planned.

- June 7th we have the Grand Finale of our 'Don't stop Believin' Pinoy Festival 2015. At new China Club. Starting from 7:00 pm.
- 12th June: Protocol act. Starting at 10:00 am at Princess Wilhelmina Park followed by a toast.
- 12th June: Philippine Food Festival. Fundraising event at the Centro di Barrio Noord starting at 7 pm.

Protocol Act includes some Awards Presentations to Philippines and Arubans. The Philippine community received so much help so they can achieve their goals here on the Island, by showing their determination and perseverance.



19 kids  
&Counting

TLC

# Duggars open up on family SEX SCANDAL



JIM Bob and Michelle Duggar, whose large, conservative family is featured on the popular reality television show "19 Kids and Counting," said they "felt like failures" when their eldest son admitted to sexually molesting young girls over a decade ago.

Josh Duggar, inappropriately touched four of his sisters and another girl who was not a member of the family in a series of incidents that began in 2002, when he was 14.

"I think as parents, we felt, we're failures," Michelle Duggar said. "Here we've tried to raise our kids to do what's right, to know what's right and yet, one of our children made some really bad choices. I think as a parent, we were just, we were devastated."

Josh Duggar, now a 27-year-old father of three, was never arrested or charged. Television network TLC pulled all episodes of "19 Kids and Counting" a day after the police reports were posted online. Josh Duggar apologized and said "as a young teenager I acted inexcusably" and resigned from his position at Family Research Council, a Washington, D.C.-based Christian lobbying group.

Jim Bob Duggar said his son first confessed to the inappropriate touching on two occasions in 2002, and that the teen said it occurred when the girls were asleep. Josh confessed again in 2003, when the child involved was very young. After that, the family sent Josh to a Christian program in Little Rock that emphasized physical work and mentoring.

"It was after that third time he came to us, is where we really felt like 'you know what? We have done everything we can as parents to handle this in-house. We need to get help,'" he said.

Asked why the police weren't called right away, Duggar said the family wanted to handle the matter themselves, that they watched the teen and put in place safeguards to protect the girls, and took comfort in the fact that the boy came forward with the confessions on his own.

After the treatment, "he went and asked God to forgive him, he went back and asked those that he had offended to forgive him," Duggar said. "We felt like the last jurisdiction of who he needed to make things right with was the law."

Duggar denied that the family tried to conceal anything from police. He said he brought Josh to an Arkansas State Police officer after he returned from Little Rock, and he said his son "told everything," but no criminal investigation was launched. Michelle Duggar said all her children have received professional counseling.

The couple said they don't know if "19 Kids and Counting" will resume. Some sponsors, including General Mills, have pulled advertising from future airings of the show.

FIFA's

# Jack Warner Vows To Tell All



JACK Warner has vowed to reveal all to investigators looking into claims of FIFA corruption. In another twist in the tale, the former vice-president - who is one of those alleged by US officials of soliciting bribes - told Trinidad and Tobago TV that he will "no longer keep secrets".

"I have kept quiet, fearing this day might come. I will do so no more," he stated.

It comes after former FIFA executive committee member Chuck Blazer's testimony, delivered in 2013 and published two days ago, revealed he admitted taking bribes relating to a series of tournaments.

"I will no longer keep secrets for them who actively seek to destroy the country," Warner said. Warner also said in the address, which was a paid political advertisement, that "I reasonably actually fear for my life."

Warner said he has

documents and checks that link FIFA officials, including embattled President Sepp Blatter, to the 2010 election in Trinidad and Tobago. "I apologize for not disclosing my knowledge of these events before," Warner said.

At his rally, a half-hour into his remarks, Warner - mopping sweat from his forehead several times - told supporters that he will not hold back in his newfound plan to expose scandal. He said he has compiled reams of documents and is delivering them to his attorneys, for them to disseminate as they see.

"Not even death will stop the avalanche that is coming," Warner said as his supporters cheered in celebration. "The die is cast. There can be no turning back. Let the chips fall where they fall."

Warner also said that when he heard Blatter was stepping down, he wrote

him to urge his immediate departure from FIFA.  
"Blatter knows why he fell. And if anyone else knows, I do," Warner said.

Twitter Investor Says

## Google SHOULD BUY the Company

SOCIAL network would be an "instant fit" for search giant

An early investor in Twitter who penned a massive blog post this week on how to save the company believes Google should buy it out.

Chris Sacca told CNBC that the social network would be an "instant fit" for Google.

"I think it's a fantastic use of Google's cash," he said. "This is the thing Google has never had. They've never understood social, they have never understood those

personal interactions. This bolts right in cleanly."

Sacca is a former Google executive who worked in the company's wireless division. In his blog post published Wednesday, he said he owns more Twitter shares than "virtually anyone working at the company." Sacca argues that Twitter should, among other things, offer curated feeds of tweets for live events to make the site more engaging and less

lonely.

Google and Twitter recently resurrected a deal to have tweets displayed prominently in Google search results, a sign that relations between the two companies have been warming lately.





## Flooding Sparks Ghana Gas Station Blast,

Killing at Least 73

FLOODING in Ghana's capital swept stored fuel into a nearby fire, setting off a huge explosion at a gas station that killed 73 people and set alight neighboring buildings.

The blast took place as dozens of people sought shelter at the gas station and in nearby shops in central Accra to escape the torrential rains. The disaster raised new concerns over the city's inadequate infrastructure.

TV footage showed corpses being piled into the back of a pickup truck and other charred bodies trapped amid the debris. Floodwaters around the site hampered rescue and recovery efforts. Officials at the nearby 37 Military Hospital said its morgue had reached capacity.

President John Dramani Mahama visited the scene on Thursday, calling the death toll "catastrophic" and offering condolences to families.

"Steps will be taken to ensure that disastrous floods and their attendant deaths do not occur again," he said.

The flooding "caused the diesel and petrol to flow away from the gas station and a fire from a nearby house led to the explosion," said Billy Anaglate, spokesman for Ghana's national fire service.

In addition to the dead at the gas station, local media reported that many drowned in various parts of the city following two days of torrential rains. The combined death toll from the explosion and flooding is expected to rise.

The explosion is likely to intensify criticism of the government's failure to improve the infrastructure. Though the downpours this week have been especially bad, heavy rains in June are not unusual yet drainage systems in Accra remain inadequate.



## Subway Is Dropping Artificial Ingredients



FAST food chain joins Taco Bell and others in offering more natural foods. Subway is joining the growing list of companies that plan to drop artificial ingredients from their menu items. The sandwich chain plans to remove artificial flavors, colors and preservatives from its food in North America by 2017, according to the Associated Press.

Some of the changes will include using banana peppers that are colored with turmeric instead of Yellow No. 5 and using turkey that includes vinegar rather than the preservative

propionic acid.

Subway earned a spate of bad press last year when a food activist launched an online petition asking the company to remove azodicarbonamide from its bread, which is a substance also used in yoga mats. The ingredient is no longer in Subway's food.

Offering up more natural food options has been en vogue among fast food chains this year. Businesses like McDonald's, Taco Bell and Panera Bread have all announced that they were dropping artificial ingredients from some or all of their products.



# Battling Flu, Serena Williams **ADVANCES** to French Open Final

A N  
out of

sorts Serena Williams overcame illness and Swiss underdog Timea Bacsinszky to win a place in the French Open final. The world number one came back from a set down for the fourth time at this tournament to triumph 4-6 6-3 6-0 and set up a showdown with 13th seed Lucie Safarova.

"I have tried everything. I thought if I lose I must fight. I have tried and tried, I don't know where I found the energy," Williams told a courtside interviewer

in French before a coughing fit ended the conversation.

"I have been feeling unwell for a few days," she later added in a statement, explaining she had to see the tournament doctor after the match.

Williams had been spotted looking unwell in the lead up to the clash and after a bright start she was broken by some exquisite returning in the fifth game.

Last year, Williams pulled out of a doubles match with her sister Venus at Wimbledon after appearing disoriented and weak on court when she was suffering from a viral illness. There was no quitting this time, however.

Number 23 seed, Bacsinszky had never gone beyond

the third round of a Grand Slam until this event in Paris, but showed no signs of being overawed as she rattled the winners past a clearly uncomfortable Williams.

Both players showed fine spirit and resilience but it was Bacsinszky who was gifted the opener on a third set point when Williams let a possible break back slip.

The American looked in real trouble when she was broken to trail 3-2 in the second set, but roared back to take the next four games and tee up a decider. Williams, who was still looking unwell between points, ran away with it in the third as she stretched her winning streak to 10 games to complete the bagel and stay on course for a third French Open crown.

# ISIS Cuts Off Vital Water Supply

to Pro-Iraqi Forces



Islamic State jihadis have closed the gates of a dam in the Iraqi city of Ramadi that they seized last month, posing a humanitarian and security threat, officials have said.

Isis fighters have repeatedly sought to control dams in Iraq, in some cases reducing the flow of water to areas under government control or flooding swathes of land to impede military operations.

The Anbar provincial council chief, Sabah Karhout, said Isis "closed all the gates" at a dam in Ramadi, which is the capital of Iraq's largest province.

The move lowered the level of the Euphrates river and cut water supplies to the areas of Khalidiyah and Habbaniyah to the east, which are some of the last held by pro-government forces in Anbar. The lower water level has also made it easier for Isis to carry out attacks, Karhout said.

He called for the dam to either be

quickly retaken or targeted in an air strike.

"Cutting the water to Khalidiyah and Habbaniyah will lead to a major humanitarian crisis not only in these areas" but also farther south, said sheikh Rafa al-Fahdawi, a leader in the Albu Fahad tribe, which is fighting Isis.

Aoun Dhiyab, a former head of the Iraqi water resources department and an expert in water issues, said: "The goal of [Isis] is not to cut the water but to reduce the level, to take advantage of it for military purposes."

"When the water level is reduced it allows them to infiltrate from Ramadi to Khalidiyah and then easily move to other areas."

Iraqi forces have launched a counteroffensive to try to recapture Ramadi but have so far either stopped on the city's outskirts or focused efforts on severing jihadi supply lines.



# Rick Perry

## Expected to Announce Presidential Bid

FORMER Texas Gov. Rick Perry launched his presidential campaign four years ago as an instant front-runner — a proven job-creator with solid conservative credentials, formidable fundraising prowess and perhaps enough cowboy swagger to take Republicans by storm.

Now he's back, hitting Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina hard and early, and studying up on policy to become better prepared.

As Perry returns to presidential politics, the question remains: Will he get another solid chance? "It's going to be hard to make a first impression a second time," said Ford O'Connell, a

Republican strategist in Washington. Despite his brain freeze on a Michigan debate stage in November 2011 — he forgot the third federal agency he promised to close if elected, then muttered "Oops" — Perry still has the policy record that made him an early force last time.

Perry left office in January after a record 14 years as governor. Under him, the state generated more than a third of America's new private-sector jobs since 2001.

While an oil and gas boom fueled much of that economic growth, Perry credits lower taxes, restrained regulation

and limits on civil litigation damages. He also pushed offering economic incentives to lure top employers to Texas and repeatedly visited states with Democratic governors to poach jobs.

Perry blamed lingering pain from back surgery in the summer of 2011 for part of the reason he performed poorly in the 2012 campaign. He has ditched his trademark cowboy boots for more comfortable footwear and wears glasses that give him a serious look. Perry also traveled extensively overseas and studied policy with experts and economists at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. He met such

business moguls as Warren Buffett and Rupert Murdoch.

Lately, Perry has traveled to Iowa, which kicks off presidential nomination voting, more than any GOP White House candidate.

As an underdog, Perry has visited out-of-the-way places in Iowa, often traveling with a single SUV rather than the busloads in his 2012 entourage. One thing Perry hopes to emulate from 2012 is his fundraising, when he amassed \$18 million in the first six weeks. He has strong donor contacts nationwide as a former Republican Governors Association chairman.

## Schools Close In Korea Amid MERS Outbreak

HUNDREDS of schools were preparing to close on Thursday in Korea because of fears over the Middle East Respiratory Virus, which has killed two people there and forced the quarantine of at least 1,300 after a man carried the virus there from the Middle East.

He was treated in at least one hospital before anyone suspected MERS and the virus spread to close relatives, hospital roommates and health care workers before anyone suspected what was happening.

The World Health Organization says 29 more people were infected. The World Health Organization says it's keeping an eye on the outbreak. What would worry experts is if it looked like the virus was spreading more easily from one person to another. That could spark a pandemic.

MERS is a coronavirus, a distant relative of SARS — severe acute respiratory syndrome virus — which infected more than 8,000 people around the world and killed 774 before it was stopped in 2004. Careful monitoring and isolation of everyone who could have been in contact with a SARS patient is what stopped the virus. MERS, so far, doesn't seem to spread easily among humans. But since 2012, it's infected at least 1,179

people and killed 442 of them. It usually can spread from one person to a close contact or two, and very rarely, one of those contacts can infect someone else. That's called tertiary transmission.

"This is the largest outbreak of MERS outside the Middle East. Since the identification of the first lab confirmed case, aggressive contact tracing has been in place and as of 3 June 2015, 1,369 contacts are being followed and are in quarantine or isolation either at home or in state-run facilities." The 68-year-old man who brought the virus to South Korea had traveled in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain — all countries where MERS has spread. Because MERS is a respiratory virus, it's not easy to recognize. WHO says 25 countries have reported cases of MERS, but 85 percent of cases have been in Saudi Arabia. Two people have been diagnosed with MERS in the United States. Both recovered.

There's no specific treatment for MERS. Patients get what's called supportive care — intravenous fluids, oxygen or a breathing tube if needed, and pain medications. People with kidney disease, diabetes, lung diseases and conditions that compromise the immune system are most at risk.

# Poor weather delays NASA's flying saucer TEST

over Hawaii

Keep an eye on the skies over Hawaii today. If all goes according to plan -- after a series of delays -- NASA will be testing out a saucer-shaped craft that could hold the key to a future human mission to Mars. The test flight was originally scheduled for Tuesday, but mission managers were forced to postpone the launch twice due to unfavorable ocean conditions.

NASA said the waves would be too high for crew members to safely recover the craft after it splashes down into the sea.

A planned launch Thursday was also scrubbed because of poor weather, NASA said. "A line of rain showers developed overnight moving towards the launch site, which result in unstable wind conditions near the surface that would prevent the launch of the balloon." The next chance to launch will be on Friday.

If conditions are suitable, an enormous balloon will lift the test vehicle carrying the disc-like Low-Density Supersonic Decelerator to a height of 120,000 feet, more than 20 miles (32 kilometers) above Earth.

Then, mission controllers will set the LDSD free to fire its rockets and try out the centerpiece of the test: a giant supersonic parachute, measuring 100 feet (30 meters) across.

For those on the ground, live video will be relayed from four cameras aboard the pioneering saucer-shaped craft.

«You get to see all the same video I do, at the same time I do,» Mark Adler, project manager at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab in California, said in an online news release.

«This year's test is centered on how our newly designed supersonic parachute will perform. We think we have a great design ready for the challenge, but the proof is in the pudding and the pudding will be made live for everyone to see.»

Updating decades-old technology

Last year, when the LDSD was tested for the first time -- also launched from the U.S. Navy's Pacific Missile Range facility in Kauai, Hawaii -- the deployment of the parachute was the only problem, when it didn't inflate as expected.

This time around, a new design is being tested: the Supersonic Ringsail parachute, which NASA says is the largest supersonic parachute ever tested for landing on Mars.

Current technology for the task -- decelerating from high speeds during re-entry into the atmosphere, to the final stages of landing on Mars -- dates back to NASA's Viking Program, which put two landers on the Martian surface in 1976. A third test flight for the LDSD is scheduled for summer 2016.



## Don't Blame Your Job For Weight Gain



JOB stress can lead to obesity, right? The latest data says maybe not. There's a good amount of data linking people who report high work stress and obesity. But how much of that relationship is due to stress triggering normal-weight people to gain weight, and can lowering job strain also help workers to slim down?

To find out, a group of European researchers analyzed eight studies involving more than 60,000 workers who reported on-job stress and allowed scientists to record their weight over time. Reporting in the International Journal of Obesity, they say that a high-stress job can't be blamed for the extra pounds.

They found no link in the studies between reported job stress and weight gain or obesity, and to cement that finding, they also reported that people who reported a drop in job strain didn't report a corresponding drop in weight.

The one group that did put on pounds, however, were workers who went from a relatively stress-free working situation into one where they experienced more job-related anxiety. That suggests that the change in stress levels might be more important to weight gain than a consistent level of stress.

While the authors admit that the way people defined job stress in the eight studies varied, and therefore make the findings a little harder to interpret, the large number of workers involved and the overall lack of association between stress levels and weight hints that perhaps work worries aren't the weight-gaining culprit that many of us like to think they are. Still, they say that the connection is worth studying more, since it's not clear whether people under stress tend to eat more or less in response to their anxiety, and addressing psychological well-being in the work environment is a good way to improve overall health too.



## US man has first skull and scalp transplant

THE first skull and scalp transplant has been performed in a 15-hour operation. James Boysen, who is 55 and from Texas, was missing the whole of the crown of his head after treatment for a rare type of cancer. He was also given a new kidney and pancreas during the procedure. The software developer said he was "amazed" at how he feels after the surgery at Houston Methodist Hospital and the Anderson Cancer Center.

### Cancer

Mr Boysen was diagnosed with leiomyosarcoma in 2006. The cancer of the muscle on the scalp was treated with a combination of chemotherapy and radiotherapy, but it permanently damaged the surrounding tissue. The scalp and skull were destroyed by the treatment, leaving his brain vulnerable. Normally doctors would use a combination of skin grafts and metal plates or 3D-printing to reconstruct his skull. But he was already on immune suppressing drugs after earlier kidney and pancreas transplants which were now failing.

His struggling organs, and the medicine, were stopping doctors performing the reconstruction and the hole in the skull prevented an organ transplant. Dr Jesse Selber, who led the team at Anderson, said the hole was 10 by 10 inches (25 cm by 25 cm) covering "the entire top half of the head". He added: "When I first met Jim, I made the connection between him needing a new kidney and pancreas and the ongoing anti-rejection medication to support them, and receiving a full scalp and skull transplant at the same time that would be protected by those same medications. "This was a truly unique clinical situation that created the opportunity to perform this complex transplant."

### Long journey

The surgeons had the idea to combine the operations four years ago, but had to wait for a donor. Mr Boysen joked he had "way more hair than when I was 21". He added: "This has been a long journey, and I am so grateful to all the doctors who performed my transplants.

"I'm amazed at how great I feel and am forever grateful that I have another chance to get back to doing the things I love and be with the people I love." Dr Michael Klebuc, from Houston Methodist Hospital, said: "This was a very complex surgery because we had to transplant the tissues utilising microsurgery.

"Imagine connecting blood vessels 1/16 of an inch under a microscope with tiny stitches about half the diameter of a human hair being done with tools that one would use to make a fine Swiss watch."

## "PARADISE for US \$20"



**LOS ROQUES, VENEZUELA:** Fears of being kidnapped or not finding toilet paper are not much of an incentive for a holiday in Venezuela. Yet hardy travelers undeterred by the tales - real and exaggerated - of crime and shortages are finding the South American nation an absurdly cheap destination.

That is thanks to exchange controls skewing the economy in favor of anyone with foreign currency, meaning you can hire a boat to a Caribbean island for US\$15 a day, or trek through Andean mountains or Amazon jungle for a week, with porters, at US\$125.

A decent hostel at a popular beach may cost US\$5 a night, while two people can have a three-course meal with wine for US\$10.

"It's crazy! This beer is costing me just a few pennies," said British tourist Matthew Napier, 35, clad in sunglasses and clutching a local Polar beer on a stunning white-sand beach with his girlfriend at Los Roques archipelago in the Caribbean.

Even at a bumped-up 90 bolivars due to the exclusive island location, a beer here costs just US\$0.22 (or 15 pence for Britons like Napier) at the black market rate most foreigners change on.

Many are wise to the situation so they look for not so surreptitious money-changers as soon as they land in Venezuela, or make arrangements ahead. Venezuela's largest denomination note is 100 bolivars - about 25 U.S. cents. Amazed at the sheer quantity of notes they receive, visitors find where to keep them the biggest problem.

### RIDICULOUS' PRICES

Despite the currency bonanza, tourists are hardly flocking to Venezuela. There were just under 1 million arrivals last year, four times fewer than neighboring Colombia which is successfully marketing itself despite decades of drug wars and a Marxist insurgency.

In Venezuela, it's the frightening level of crime that mainly puts people off, plus acute shortages of basic products from toilet paper to milk, and diapers. The giveaway prices in Venezuela for foreigners are a recent phenomenon: the black market price of a U.S. dollar has shot up nearly six-fold from 70 bolivars to over 400 in the last year.

The government is unable to meet demand at official exchange rates, which range from 6.3 to 200 bolivars per dollar, so the black market satisfies those prepared to pay a hefty premium.

In contrast with tourists, Venezuelans' purchasing power has fallen as wage rises cannot match inflation of 68 percent in 2014 and widely forecast to hit triple digits this year. Shopping for basic food and goods has become a daily struggle for many locals - let alone the sort of exotic holidays foreigners are enjoying in their country.

"There is no other country in the world in this situation. It's very sad," lamented Napier's Venezuelan girlfriend Aiskel Rendon, 31, a tax analyst who also lives in England.



## Liverpool sign Milner from Manchester City

LIVERPOOL have moved quickly into the transfer market after a disappointing end to the season, announcing on Thursday that midfielder James Milner was joining them from Manchester City. The 29-year-old, who has 53 caps for England, is out of contract at City and will join Liverpool on a free transfer on July 1, the Premier League club said on its website.

While the signing of a hard-working player who won two Premier League titles at City in five years since joining from Aston Villa is a coup for Liverpool, it also signifies the start of a squad makeover at City.

City's ageing squad finished eight points behind champions Chelsea in the Premier League and Manuel Pellegrini will be given a large budget to freshen things up this summer, having been restricted by UEFA's Financial Fair Play (FFP) rules during the last two windows.

Last season City's starting 11 regularly averaged nearly 30, with the likes of Yaya Toure, Pablo Zabaleta, Martin Demichelis and Fernandinho all 30 plus.

Milner, however, still has plenty to offer and was arguably one of City's best performers last season so his capture is a boost for manager Brendan Rodgers who will be under pressure to get Liverpool back in the top four next season after finishing sixth in this campaign.

## ENGLAND 'ready to host 2022 World Cup if asked'



ENGLAND would be ready and able to host the Fifa World Cup in 2022 if it is stripped from Qatar, according to a British government minister.

Swiss and US authorities are looking at corruption claims around the bidding processes for the 2018 and 2022 events. UK Sport Secretary John Whittingdale says England has the facilities but added it is unlikely to happen as Russia is staging the 2018 tournament. Under Fifa rules the Cup cannot be held on the same continent twice in a row. The shock resignation of Fifa president Sepp Blatter on Tuesday has intensified calls for the 2022 bidding process to be re-run, if that process is proved to have

been corrupt. Qatar organisers have always denied any corruption in their bid. Speaking in the House of Commons on Thursday, Whittingdale said: "If Fifa came forward and asked us to consider hosting it, we have the facilities in this country and of course we did mount a very impressive, if unsuccessful, bid to host the 2018 World Cup."

"In terms of the decision to hold the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, that is obviously something which we are watching, but at the moment that decision stands. "If it were decided to change that, I think as the chairman of the English FA Greg Dyke observed, if Russia hosts the World Cup in 2018 it

does seem very unlikely that another European country would host it in 2022."

Prime Minister David Cameron has backed Whittingdale's comments but said his priority is "cleaning up" Fifa. Australia, who lost out to Qatar in the bidding process, has also indicated it could step in. However, Australian sports minister Sussan Ley has made it clear the country would not make another bid to host a World Cup until

there are major changes at Fifa. The bidding process for the 2018 World Cup, which England unsuccessfully contested, is also under scrutiny. Swiss authorities revealed last week they were looking into how the 2018 and 2022 tournaments were allocated, while America's FBI has also announced it has launched an investigation. However, Russian sports minister Vitaly Mutko insisted there was "no risk" of his country being stripped of its rights.

### 2018 and 2022 World Cup bidders and winners

2018: Russia, England, Belgium and Netherlands, Portugal and Spain
2022: Qatar, Australia, Japan, South Korea, United States